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IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 10, line 11 as follows:

Figure 5 illustrates exemplary steps that may be performed by MTP routing process in regulating message flow based on ticket voucher grants according to an embodiment of the present invention. Referring to Figure 5, in step **ST1**, MTP routing process **408** selects an outgoing signaling linkset and a link within the linkset based on the destination point code and signaling link selection code in a message. In SS7 communications, a link is a path to an adjacent node. Links are placed into groups, which are referred to as linksets. All links in a linkset are capable of accessing the same adjacent signaling node. In step **ST2**, MTP routing process **408** determines whether the outgoing signaling linkset is on hold. Determining whether a linkset is on hold can be accomplished by reading a flag in a routing table associated with the linkset. The flag may be set by SS7 traffic management processes when a link fails. The following is a sequence of events that may occur in a signaling gateway or a signal transfer point when a signaling link fails:

1. A link in a linkset becomes unavailable.
2. The communication module associated with the link notifies other modules that its link is unavailable.
3. The MTP routing functions associated with each communication module flag the linkset as on hold. MTP layer 3 functions associated with the communication module having the failed linkset send a changeover

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message to the adjacent node and start a sequence timer to prevent race conditions from occurring.

4. A message addressed to the on-hold linkset arrives at one of the communication modules and is enqueued because the linkset is on hold.
5. The linkset goes off-hold because a) the sequence timer expires, or b) a changeover acknowledgement message is received from an adjacent node.
6. Messages queued while linkset was on hold are now routed, using ticket voucher messages for pacing.--